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he determined to adopt him. In conformity with this resolution, the youth received an education suitable to a prince who was destined to succeed to the Musnud. He is said, however, to have developed, at this period, a propensity to delight in the sufferings of the brute creation. The affection of the old nabob towards his adopted son still increasing, he lavished upon him every mark of regard.

To give an idea of the splendour which attached to his youth, and from which he fell, the following account of his wedding is taken from Forbes's Oriental Memoirs.

At thirteen his marriage took place, and was celebrated at Lucknow, in 1795, and was one of the most magnificent in modern times. The nabob had his tents pitched on the plains, near the city of Lucknow; among the number were two remarkably large, made of strong cotton cloth, lined with the finest English broad-cloth, cut in stripes of different colours, with cords of silk and cotton. These two tents cost five lacs of rupees, or above sixty thousand pounds sterling; they were each one hundred and twenty feet long, sixty broad, and the poles about sixty feet high; the walls of the tents were ten feet high; part of them were cut into lattice-work, for the women of the nabob's seraglio, and those of the principal nobility to see through. His highness was covered with jewels, to the amount, at least, of two millions sterling. From thence we removed to the Shumeeana, which was illuminated by two hundred elegant girandoles from Europe, as many glass shades with wax candles, and several hundred flambeaux. When seated under this extensive canopy, above one hundred dancing girls, richly dressed, went through their elegant dances, and sung some soft airs of the country, chiefly Persian and Hindoo-Persic.

About seven o'clock the bridegroom made his appearance, so absurdly loaded with jewels, that he could hardly move. The bride was ten years old; they were both of a dark complexion, and not handsome.

From the Shumeeana we proceeded on elephants to a most extensive and beautiful garden, about a mile distant. The procession was grand beyond conception: it consisted of about twelve hundred elephants, richly caparisoned, drawn up in a regular line, like a regiment of soldiers. About a hundred elephants in the centre had houdahs, or castles covered with silver; in the midst of these appeared the nabob, mounted on an uncommonly large elephant, within a houdah covered with gold, richly set with precious stones. The elephant was caparisoned with cloth of gold. On his right hand was Mr. George Johnstone, the British resident at the court of Lucknow; on his left the young bridegroom. The English gentlemen and ladies, and the native nobility, were intermixed on the right and left. On both sides of the road, from the tents to the garden, were raised artificial scenery of bamboo-work, very high, representing bastions, arches, minarets, and towers, covered with lights in glass lamps. On each side of the procession were dancing-girls, superbly dressed, on platforms supported and carried by bearers. These platforms consisted of a hundred on each side of the procession, all covered with gold and silver cloths, with two girls and two musicians on each platform.

The ground from the tents to the garden, forming the road on which we moved, was inlaid with fireworks: at every step of the elephants the earth burst before us, and threw up artificial stars in the heavens, besides innumerable rockets, and many hundred wooden shells that burst in the air, and shot forth a thousand fiery serpents, these, winding through the atmosphere, illuminated the sky, and, aided by the light of the bamboo scenery, turned a dark night into a bright day. The whole of this grand scene was further lighted by above three thousand flambeaux, carried by men hired for the occasion.

In this manner we moved on in stately pomp to the garden, which we entered, after descending from the elephants. It was all illuminated by innumerable transparent paper lamps or lanterns, of various colours, suspended to the branches of the trees. In the centre was a large edifice, to which we ascended, and were introduced into a grand saloon, adorned with girandoles and pendant lustres of English manufacture, lighted with wax-candles. Here we had an elegant and sumptuous collation of European and Indian dishes, with wines, fruits, and sweet-

meats; at the same time about a hundred dancing-girls sung their lively airs, and performed their native dances.

Thus passed the time until dawn, when we all returned to our respective homes, delighted and wonder-struck with this enchanting scene, which surpassed in splendour every entertainment of the kind beheld in this country. The affable nabob rightly observed, with a little Asiatic vanity, that such a spectacle was never before seen in India, and never would be seen again. The whole expence of this marriage feast, which was repeated for three successive nights in the same manner, cost upwards of three hundred thousand pounds sterling.

When Vizier Ally was recognised by Asuf as his successor to the throne, great opposition was manifested by the old nabob's family. He was, however, on the death of the latter, upheld by the English government, and placed on the throne.

After being placed upon the throne, he shewed a turbulent, restless, and intriguing temper, and broke his faith with the English government; the consequence of which, was his being deposed from the Musnud, and Sadut Ally, brother of the late nabob, was placed on it.

A pension was assigned to Vizier Ally of two lacs of rupees per annum, about twenty-five thousand pounds; but it was considered necessary that he should reside near the presidency, that he might be more under the eye of government. He, therefore, proceeded from Lucknow to Benares, where Mr. Cherry, the Company's resident, was to make arrangements for his going to the presidency.

Shortly after his arrival at Benares, Mr. Cherry invited him to breakfast. He came, attended by a large armed retinue; which Mr. Cherry disregarded as being hostile, although he had had a caution.

Vizier Ally complained much of the Company's treatment of him; and, on a signal being given, several of his attendants rushed in, and cut Mr. Cherry and Mr. Graham to pieces. They then proceeded to the house of Mr. Davis, with the view of massacring him also; but fortunately he had some intimation of his danger before they arrived, and got his family to the top of the house, and posted himself at the summit of a narrow, circular stone stair-case. Here the ruffians pursued him, but with a hog-spear he defended himself for a long time, killing several, which blocked up the passage, till he was rescued by a party of the Company's troops, which came to his assistance. The followers of Vizier Ally killed another European gentleman at Benares.

Vizier Ally made his escape into the territory of the Rajah of Berar, a powerful and independent chief, who refused to give him up, unless under a promise of his life being spared. This the English government acceded to, and he was brought to Calcutta, and confined in the garrison of Fort William, in a kind of iron cage; and here he died, after an imprisonment of seventeen years and a few months, as above mentioned.

HOLLY AND IVY.

Reviewing the many strange and apparently unmeaning customs which characterize a people, the superficial observer will see only what may be laughed at, as ridiculous and absurd; whilst the antiquarian or philosopher, diving beneath the surface, and comparing the present with the past, is frequently enabled to separate, in wisdom's crucible, the dross from the finer metal, and thus to trace these customs to their true origin.

Ireland is a spot peculiarly marked by such customs; some derived from the earliest annals of Druidism—others coeval with Christianity, all richly deserving the enquiry of the critic, or the ingenious conjecture and research of the antiquary. The antic mummeries of a rude, unpolished peasantry—the boisterous and hearty mirth that at certain periods of the year bursts forth through every impediment, levelling the barriers that modern refinement would interpose, and giving full scope to the strong ebullition of national feeling, show, that in sunshine or storm—in times of dearth or plenty—in the calm and sluggish stillness of debasing servitude, or the hurricane of political agitation—under every vicissitude or clime, the Irish peasant is the Irish peasant still—the light-hearted, generous,

enthusiastic lover of his father-land—the ardent panegyrist of the olden time, and the scrupulous observer of the various fetes of fun and superstition handed down through a long series of years; no matter how inconsistent with reason or common sense they may be—whether the cause of their institute be remembered or forgotten.

From the fire of Baal, at Summer's dawn, to the Bridegroom of Bridget's night—from the startling rites of all-Hallowe'en to the pancake tossing of Shrovetide, we have seen comments and discussions, from Vallancey, to the present day; but why, in the festivals of Christmas, the Holly and Ivy should, in preference to all other shrubs, adorn the house or embower the dresser; or, huddled together, and hung with ribbons, become the throne of a Murdered Wren, no attempt has yet been made to explain. I shall, therefore, Mr. Editor, with your permission, endeavour to throw some light upon the transaction.

It appears to me a very reasonable supposition that, in a season of universal gladness, sensible and mercurial people, who knew the value of the senses as conduits of information, would avail themselves of the opportunity of blending instruction with amusement, and thus point out to the *aosóg* of that day, whilst they carolled and gambolled round the object of their delight, its grand and mysterious associations. Like the Jews and Egyptians, the Irish were extremely fond of figure and hieroglyphic; and like the old Fire-worshippers of Persia, in their May-eve fire, (Baalteine is the name of May) worshipped Baal or the Sun, who was considered the supreme dispenser of life and light to this nether world. On the introduction of Christianity, as may be well conjectured, they naturally looked around for suitable emblems to represent the objects of their new faith. As an illustration of the Trinity, the Shamrock was immediately adopted; whilst the Wren, embedded in Holly and Ivy, might not be considered an inappropriate type of the incarnation. Indeed they could scarcely have chosen a more expressive symbol of the wondrous humility of the Deity in taking the helpless form of infancy than the Wren, the smallest and most despicable of the feathered race in our island. The chilling wind and piercing cold of winter, with the various circumstances of poverty and humiliation which attended a Saviour's birth, are not inaptly denoted by the prickly roughness of the Holly, which circles the poor persecuted Wren, hunted down, as was its Creator, by the unreflecting votaries of false, misguided zeal. But, whilst the Holly reminds us of the stings and crosses of a wicked and contumacious world, the smooth unruffled surface of the Ivy must also bring to our recollection the peace and goodness announced in the mild tenets of the Gospel to man, and the value of a good conscience, which, though bound up too often through life's journey with the holly of turmoil and disappointment, yet strengthens and supports its possessor, like the Ivy that clasps and shelters some aged oak or venerable pile, adding lustre to its beauty, and protecting it from ruin.

The bush then is emblematic of the crib of Bethlehem; the ribbons that embellish it represent the swaddling clothes that wrapped the tender limbs of the Redeemer; and the glad and merry notes of the wren-boys, chaunting the praises of "the king of all birds," may denote, though feeble and immeasurably distant indeed, the sweet melody of the angelic choir announcing the glad tidings of redemption; and, to pursue farther the illustration, the rich offerings of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, of the Eastern wise men, may be typified by the willing contributions given in honour of the little feathered monarch to his numerous and devoted followers, who generally retire at the close of e'en, to enjoy that social happiness which, to them, as individuals, their comparatively cheerless dwellings are too often incapable of affording:

"For Christmas comes but once a year,
And when it comes it brings good cheer."

Such, Mr. Editor, is, I conceive, a true interpretation of these annual displays; which, however solemn and instructive their origin may have been, yet, now-a-days, form a portion of these superstitious observances that, in many places, disgrace our country, being succeeded by scenes of vice, riot, and intemperance. However, there can be no doubt that the character of our people is fast

improving—education is making rapid strides—the thirst for information is abroad, and crime must necessarily give way to the steady advance of that light and genial instruction which is now spreading over every portion of our island.

A WREN BOY.

Cork, Nov. 1834.

THE SNOW STORM.

(From "The Juvenile Forget Me Not.")

BY J. OGLE.

Thick clouds ascending slowly climb'd the sky—
The red round sun had set—a storm was nigh;
The village children's evening task was done,
And all were happy in their homes—but one:
She saw the clouds uniting far and near,
While darkness thickened, and she sighed for fear.
With starting tears, and lips apart, she ran
To reach her home, ere yet the storm began.
But ah! the winds arise, the tempest breaks,
Fast whirls the snow in broad contiguous flakes;
O'er roofs, and trees, and field, and road, 'tis spread—
Pale, cold, and noiseless—emblem of the dead!
The lonely church presents a solemn sight—
The tower, the yew, the graves, are clothed in white:
Beneath that soil, poor child! thy mother lies,
Nor feels the storm that round thee falls and flies.
Oh, haste thee, maiden!—haste thee on thy way,
Observe the path, nor let thy footstep stray;
And tread with caution where the single beam
Extends—a dang'rous bridge across the stream;
Forget the miles between thy home and thee,
Lest terror rob thee of the power to flee.
In such a night the stoutest hearts might fail,
When hopeless horror, cold, fatigue, assail.
Before the fire, with warm expanded hands,
Expecting thee, thy sister smiling stands;
While, as the flickering flames arise and fall,
The girl's huge shadow dances on the wall.
Thy grandam longs in vain to aid thee child,
So weak with age is she, the night so wild;
Nor has she near one sympathising friend,
To guide and guard thee to thy journey's end.
Tow'rd the old clock her anxious gaze is cast,
That shows the hour of thy return is past;
And as the gusts against the lattice beat,
She thinks each sudden sound the sound of feet.
That night the shepherd strove to cross the plain,
And save his distant flock—but strove in vain.
Deep lay the drift, the snow flew fiercely still,
And sheep by twenties perish'd on the hill.
Full half his flock, he knew, must needs be lost;
His fingers slowly counted up the cost.
The dog's caress, his angry hand forbade—
His head was busy, and his heart was sad.
The mails were stopp'd, or wandered from the road—
The plunging horses fail'd to move the load.
And where the wind blew freely o'er the moor,
Three feet of snow had block'd the widow's door;
Nor can a helpless child, when tempests rave,
And spread beneath his feet the traveller's grave,
Endure what manhood well might bear to brave;
And if a wand'r'er fall, the ruthless skies
Will wind the sheet of death before he dies;
The brain will swim, and fatal torpor creep
O'er all the limbs, and seal the eyes in sleep.
Thus, when the moon mid clouded radiance rose,
And lit the paleness of the bleaching snows,
Deep, deep beneath their surface, smooth and fair,
They hid the gentle maid they would not spare.
That night her father, on the southern seas,
Was sailing, homeward bound, before the breeze;
With helm in hand he stood, and, musing, smiled,
He thought to meet—ah, how he mourned his child!

DUBLIN:

Printed and Published by P. D. HARDY, 3, Cecilia Street; to whom all communications are to be addressed.

Sold by all Booksellers in Ireland.

In London, by Richard Groombridge, 6, Panyer-alley, Paternoster-row; in Liverpool, by Wilmer and Smith; in Manchester, by Ambery; in Birmingham, by Guest; in Glasgow, by John Macleod; and in Edinburgh, by N. Bowack.